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ABSTRACT

The diversity of values about sexuality among administrators, teachers, parents, and children creates serious challenge for public schools. This case study offers an insider's view of what happened in a community when conservative parent groups challenged a senior high health curriculum. In the "Laketown Public Schools," conflict erupted over the "Current Health Issues" course. The main group opposing the curriculum, Concerned Citizens, objected to the value-free approach that invited students to make their own choices. They feared that information about sex would encourage promiscuity and that the concept of "safe sex" misrepresented real dangers. They objected to the inclusion of homosexuality as a discussion topic. Language played a critical role in the conflict: "safe sex," "alternative lifestyles," "graphic" descriptions of sex, the use of warlike and partnership metaphors to describe the conflict, and even the names of various groups became the subject of debate and dialogue. The Concerned Citizens group and the vocal, but less organized group supporting the curriculum exercised an agenda-setting power. A third, much larger, though less vocal group of parents took a variety of positions during the debates. Students were active participants. The curriculum director refocused the discussion on the language of the community, allowing the parties to agree to 15 conclusions that provided a framework for resolving the conflict. Schools, as microcosms of democracy, are required to be inclusive of the diversity that exists in the community, and school administrators can contribute by doing research and reflecting on their practices. (Contains 12 references.) (TEJ)

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UCEA PRESENTATION

SEX EDUCATION: ISSUES OF POWER AND PARTICIPATION

PRESENTED TO UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

DEALING WITH DIVERSITY: CREATING SCHOOLS THAT WORK FOR CHILDREN

CONVENTION '92

MINNEAPOLIS MARRIOTT CITY CENTER
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EA 024 703

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SEX EDUCATION: ISSUES OF POWER AND PARTICIPATION

Diverse values about sexuality are a challenge to public education in creating schools that work for children. I am completing research for my doctoral dissertation on the impact of diverse community values about sexuality on the health education curriculum in Laketown Public Schools, a small midwestern school district. This case study provides an insider's view of the dynamics of what happened in a community when the state mandated parent involvement, conservative parent groups emerged to influence curricular decisions, and for three years the school district was faced with the dilemma of successfully negotiating a political minefield.

The curriculum review of health education that began in the fall of 1989, as a routine step in the Laketown district's curriculum review involving parents, students, and teachers, heated up when a group with national affiliations, the Concerned Citizens for Quality Education, intervened. The group strategized to impose their views about sexuality education on an elective course for senior high students, "Current Health Issues." Although the official review process ended in the spring of 1992 with the board approval of

15 conclusions (Appendix), the controversy about sexuality education continues into the present with the school district.

The drama of conflict that was played out on the stage of the Laketown school district had many scenes. The conflict was reported in the major metropolitan press several times. The teacher of the course, "Current Health Issues," felt harassed and came close to resigning her position because of the intense community scrutiny of the sexuality portion of the course. Over a period of three months the local weekly newspaper was filled with letters to the editors, many of them written by parents in support of the Concerned Citizens group. During an end of the year evaluation, the curriculum director received adverse evaluations by two members of the board who were in sympathy with the Concerned Citizens. Students at the senior high school staged a walkout in protest over the decision by the board of education to suspend a very popular course on health issues, taught by a very popular teacher. Over 100 parents, largely from one church congregation, appeared at a health curriculum review to lobby for a conservative "abstinence only" sex education curriculum entitled "Sex Respect." Twenty parents, students,

teachers, and administrators representative of the many value orientations in the district met for over 22 hours to review the senior high health course which had been in the curriculum for thirteen years.

I became a major participant in this conflict when I began my work as director of curriculum and personnel in the Laketown district in August, 1990 midway in the health education curriculum review process. Initially I thought this curriculum review was to be only a very small part of my work, but my illusions were soon shattered. The ink was barely dry on my contract when two spokespersons for the Concerned Parents for Quality Education[1] visited me with their demands related to the health curriculum in general and the sexuality part of the health curriculum in particular.

I decided to do a case study on the controversy for my dissertation, recognizing that as a researcher of this case who is also a key participant, I would have to be thorough and fair in gathering data from many perspectives. I recorded in field notes interviews and conversations with key actors, including parents, students, faculty, board members, members of

[1]Throughout this paper, I will use the term "Concerned Citizens group" to refer to the organized group of parents and community members, even though the group changed its name two times over the course of the three years of this study.

the Concerned Parents group, and community members. I have transcripts of all board meetings which the local access channel routinely videotapes. In addition, I recorded all committee meetings with participants' permission and had transcripts made from those tapes. When analyzing this substantial amount of material, I have attempted to step back and observe and analyze my own behavior along with that of the other players in the drama.

In writing this study I have used the term "curriculum director" to designate my action.[2] When I began analyzing the data, I called myself "curriculum director" as a strategy of looking at the transcripts of events without reliving them. It was a process of an "insider" trying to become and "outsider" and thus provide the most unbiased analysis of the data possible. I have asked some of the other participants in the conflict in Laketown to read and react to my descriptions of activity and analysis of events to provide a check on the accuracy of my observations and analysis. I am aware that my intimate involvement in the process presents methodological problems but I took

[2]When "curriculum director" is used in the text of this study, the reference is to the participant in the drama; when "I" is used in the text of the study, the reference is to the researcher.

comfort from Merrinan, in, Case Study Research in Education:

> "Because what is being studied in education is assumed to be in flux, multifaceted, and highly contextual, because information gathered is a function of who gives it and how skilled the researcher is at getting it, and because the emergent design of a qualitative case study precludes a priori controls, achieving reliability in the traditional sense is not only fanciful but impossible." (p. 172)

I also need to acknowledge that,as curriculum director, I was not a neutral party in the conflict in the district. Although I made every effort to provide avenues for all the parents to be heard,[3] I strongly supported the program that existed within the health curriculum and strongly supported the teachers who were teaching it. I balanced my personal viewpoint with the need to provide an open process in the community discussion and succeeded in that effort, at least within the review committee whose members provided me an unsolicited positive review in making their report to the board of education in May, 1992. For instance, Pastor Erickson, who initially confronted the board on the existence of course and later became a member of the review committee made this statement:

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[3]At the beginning of the process to review the Current Health Issues class, I requested that a neutral facilitator be assigned to lead the group through the review process. The board assigned the task to me.

"I guess I would like to make this major comment. Jerry Spies did a great job; it was something not very simplistic in nature and he led us through a difficult process with a great deal of tolerance. In the end we were really a group of human beings working together. I feel very good about the process and was very impressed with what took place."

An advantage I had in viewing this process from the inside was that I had access to information unavailable to any "outside" observer. From this vantage point in the conflict, I offer this preliminary analysis.

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

I have collected a massive amount of information over the three years of this study and the data continue to be generated into the present. As I began to analyze the data from the three years of conflict to attempt to make sense out of what happened three themes surfaced: the major concerns at the heart of the controversy; the role of language in the conflict; and the way power was used in deciding the health curriculum in Laketown.

Major Concerns:

The Concerned Citizens focused the attention of the sexuality education discussion on four major concerns. The first concern was that the instruction related to sexuality in the health curriculum was non-directive or value free when it should be directive. The Concerned Citizens contended that the curriculum taught was non-directive because the students were not told "directly" what their action should be; rather they were given information and "non-directly" invited to make their own choices about sexuality.[4]

One of the participants on the review committee explained:

> "The two methods are not compatible with each other. The teaching in this course is non directive value free. And with that form there aren't any standards expected from the student except that those who choose to be sexually active will use condoms and contraceptives. And the other type is directive education which has definite objectives, and that type gives clear guidelines so students know not only how to make their decision but what they should decide. In that form, abstinence is the goal and not one of the options available."

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[4]The issue of directive versus non-directive education emerged not only in the sexuality educaiton discussion, but also became a major issue in the drug abuse prevention curricula during the 1990-1991 school year.

At a public forum before the school board the Concerned Citizens introduced their second concern that instruction on sexuality was becoming more "training" than "education." A parent stood up and said:

> "I think that this unit (on contraceptives, with special section on condoms), to some people in the community, steps over the border of education into training...clearly, when we get into very specific details of contraception and techniques, we're in the area of training."

Parents from the Concerned Citizens feared that giving students information about contraception would prompt them to become sexually active. Pastor Erickson, trying to persuade the board that the course should not exist, quoted a local doctor's letter in the metropolitan press: "sex education in the schools has only made matters worse. Evidence shows that sex education courses contribute to the sexual activities of students taking the courses."

A group of students reacted vehemently to this "training" concern and the possibility that the current health issues course would be dropped. They felt the course offered a solid foundation for making decisions about their own sexuality preventing them from experimenting out of ignorance. To highlight their view they had t-shirts printed with the statement

"Education, Not Experimentation," which they wore in protest to a board meeting.

The Concerned Citizens raised a third concern about the term, "safe sex." A parent from the Concerned Citizens group challenged each board member to purchase condoms for their teen age children if they thought sex with a condom was "safe." They insisted that sexual abstinence was the only "safe" alternative and the use of condoms to prevent AIDS or pregnancy is not "safe" at all. After spending considerable time discussing safe sex, the review committee recommended to the Laketown board that the language of "less dangerous" should be used rather than "safe" when discussing the use of condoms in the health curriculum.(Appendix, #4)

The Concerned Citizens' fourth concern was that homosexuality was presented in the health curriculum as a lifestyle chosen by some individuals. They considered it morally reprehensible and unfit as a topic for discussion in classrooms of the district. One of the parents on the review committee put it in the perspective of budget when she said, "I just don't see...why we are spending our hard-earned budget money

on stuff like this that doesn't really have any real purpose."

Although only a day and a half had been set aside in the course to teach about sexual behaviors including homosexuality, the review committee struggled with whether the class should spend time discussing homosexuality at all. The Concerned Citizens felt it not only unnecessary but inappropriate. After heated debate, the other review committee members prevailed over the objections of the Concerned Citizens and recommended that the topic remain. (Appendix, #11)

Language Issues

Throughout the review process, the language used by individuals and groups became a source of conflict. Whether the discussion was focused on language used in class, the terminology of "safe sex", the reference to "alternative life styles," the title of the course itself, or the name the Concerned Citizens called themselves, language was often a subject of debate and dialogue.

The Concerned Citizens used metaphors of war, battle, crusade, fight in their rallying cries for correcting the school sexuality curriculum. The director of curriculum used the metaphor of

partnership, derived from the district's mission statement developed during strategic planning.[5] During the first meeting of the review committee selected as a representative group of parents, students, staff, and clergy, he described the mission of the committee as a partnership rather than a battle:

> "Much of the discussion about this issue has been of a very adversarial nature with frequent references to winning and losing in this battle. I would like to suggest that in this committee we consciously change the metaphor of battle to that of community and partnership. I do not believe that we will have winners and losers in this discussion. If we see ourselves as partners within this community of Laketown, rather than warriors on two sides of an issue, I believe we will go much further and actually bring about an improvement in our quality programs that we can be justifiably proud of."

At the end of the three year process, even though there had been a great emphasis on community building and partnership, the language that prevailed among the Concerned Citizens was that of war. In a communication to its membership about the accomplishments of the review committee, a leader of the Concerned Citizens group wrote:

> "I believe that our involvement is beginning to impact our community for righteousness. This is not the end of the war we are called to fight. It is just

[5]The mission statement of the Laketown Schools was: "To develop an educational partnership among students, school staff, parents, and community where all students are prepared to be lifelong learners and productive citizens, making responsible decisions that have an impact on their community, their country and their world.

the first battle. Take courage--you are making a difference."

Lakoff and Johnson indicated in Metaphors We Live By:

"In all aspects of life, not just in politics or in love, we define our reality in terms of metaphors and then proceed to act on the basis of the metaphors. We draw inferences, set goals, make commitments, and execute plans, all on the basis of how we in part structure our experience, consciously and unconsciously, by means of metaphor." (Lakoff, 158)

The metaphors of battle or partnership not only reflected the disposition of the various players in the drama, but provided a framework for the actions of the individuals and groups.

The name they called themselves became and issue for the Concerned Citizens. Over a period of the three years of this study , the Concerned Citizens group had three different names. The original name of the organization was the "Concerned Parents for Quality Education." That was changed early in the review process to "Concerned Citizens for Quality Education" in order to recognize that other citizens as well as parents were"concerned." Several ministers and some district residents who no longer had children in school joined the group. The new name signaled a new direction for the "concerned" citizens as they exerted their influence in other political arenas. They sent a

letter to the state legislature saying they felt rebuffed and put off by the Laketown curriculum advisory council.[6] The letter of November 28, 1989, signed by 567 Laketown residents, complained that: "we were accused of sticking our noses into areas that the council did not want, and we were told that although they appreciated our input, they would not be able to give us any more time. They had to get on with business."

In the 1991-1992 school year, the third year of this case study, the Concerned Citizens group changed to yet a third name. Pastor Tad Daniels, chair of the group, explained to the curriculum director that the new name, "Community Network for Education," would serve to focus the attention of the group "to be cooperative with the school district and not adversarial." He felt that the word "concerned" put school personnel on the defensive. The word "concerned" had taken on a whole new meaning in the context of the Concerned Citizens group. The "concerns' in their view which had been outlined in the

[6]The state legislature has been the site of considerable lobbying by groups such as the Concerned Citizens group. Issues such as 'standard' and 'non-standard' curriculum, parents' rights to view and choose instructional materials and curricula for their children, and outcome based education validity issues. Groups from many other districts in the state have testified at open hearing over these issues.

letter sent to the legislature three years earlier, included such areas as schools undermining parental authority, curricula emphasizing open-ended decision making, and schools providing unnecessary information to students in the areas of drug education, sex education, and death education.

Changing the name also reflected an internal struggle within the group between being aggressive in its insistence upon its value system or cooperative with school personnel. An example of this internal conflict occurred when Harold Dewey, a board member sympathetic to the Concerned Citizens group, proclaimed before all his cohorts at a public forum, "There are some things which I cannot compromise. The existence of this course is one of them." After taking such a strong position, only one day later in a private conversation with the superintendent and curriculum director he suggested, "we need to look for a compromise in this situation." As he left the room following that discussion, he turned back and said, "I hope you guys realize that I really don't have anything against you. I hope we can continue to be friends, because I really do like you guys."

In spite of his commitment to the goal of eliminating the course he felt a stronger personal commitment to his relationship to the people who happened to be administrators in the district.

The Concerned Citizens objected to the very existence of the course, Current Health Issues, because "gutter" language of sex was allowed. Pastor Erickson brought 350 people from his congregation to a board meeting to join him in his challenge:

> "These people here tonight have been given the run around and ignored. ...I have consulted a lawyer and there is precedent to file suit against a school district for failure to disclose potentially harmful and obscene class content. The materials tend to be lascivious."

Some parents wrote letters to express their disgust to the editor of the local newspaper over the idea that good money was being spent on a class in which obscene, vulgar, and gutter language was allowed.

A substitute teacher, also a member of the Concerned Citizens group, related at the open forum portion of a board meeting how the students in the health class told her that they were allowed to use vulgar and obscene language in classroom discussion. The assistant principal at the high school who had observed the regular health teacher many times, jumped

up at the meeting and said what was being alleged was simply not true.

A student in the class later told the curriculum director that he and his classmates were maybe "leading her on a bit because we knew she was one of the 'concerned' parents." The health teacher and the two students, who were members of the review committee, insisted there was a proper usage of language in the class. The conclusion developed by the committee was that the use of appropriate terminology would be required in class. "The ground rules of the class specify the use of appropriate terminology in all classroom discussion. Questions about the meaning of inappropriate 'street language' will be answered but the use of such language as a substitute for appropriate terminology will not be tolerated." (Appendix #3)

Although the course had been called "Current Health Issues" for thirteen years, Pastor Erickson challenged the name, charging school officials with deliberately deceiving parents by not calling the course what it really was--sex education. The review committee, as a result, recommended changing the name

to "Relationships and Sexual Health Issues." (Appendix, #10)

Power Groups: Who decides the curriculum?

The person or group controlling the language, controlled the agenda for the discussion of curriculum in the district. As Henry A. Giroux pointed out in his work, Schooling and the Struggle for Public Life:

> "It is within and through language that individuals in particular historical contexts shape values into particular forms and practices. As part of the production of meaning, language represents a central force in the struggle for voice. Schools are one of the primary public spheres where, through the influence of authority, resistance, and dialogue, language is able to shape the way various individuals and groups encode and thereby engage the world." (p. 135)

The Concerned Citizens group quite dramatically claimed the attention of the school district and the citizens of Laketown through their attacks on the sexuality curriculum. The other parties to the contending conflict , the teachers, the students, and the other parents raised their voices as well in an effort to retain control and power over the curriculum of the school district.

I identified three different groups of parents in the conflict: the Concerned Citizens group, the angry

opposition, and the amorphous group who took a variety of positions.

The Concerned Citizens group expounded the view of such national organizations as the Citizens for Excellence in Education,[7] thereby going far beyond the borders of the Laketown community for their nurture. The foundation of the CEE is expressed in their brochure:

> "There are 44,000 children in 15,700 school districts in America. These children are, for the most part, locked in a school system that primarily promotes atheistic programs and philosophies."

Giroux has critiqued what he perceives as the moral advocacy of organizations similar to CEE on the national political scene.

> " Since the Reagan administration and the appointment of William Bennett as the Secretary of Education and continuing through the Bush administration, various right wing spokesperson, in and out of the government, have become quite aggressive in pushing a program for schools to address and teach a particular set of moral values and virtues. Part of that aggressive advocacy is a scathing criticism of existing liberal moral education programs in the public schools. (p.42)

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[7]In the October 7, 1992, edition of Education Week, a front page story by Ann Bradley details the political agenda of the CEE and indicates that it shares its materials with 30 other major politically conservative Christian organizations including "Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, the Eagle Forum, the Family Research Council, and the National Association of Evangelicals."

The Concerned Citizens group's link to a national political and religious agenda outside the confines of the Laketown area was evident from the materials they shared with the curriculum director and the strategies they employed. Often parents from the Concerned Citizens group would bring in articles and information that was generated by national and state publications such as Focus on the Family and the Berean League Update.

Parents generally favorable to what was being taught in the sexuality curriculum in the school system were often very vocal but loosely organized. They objected to intrusions by the Concerned Citizens group, classifying each intrusion as censorship and a violation of the church state mandate. This group did not have an official organization and although subscribing to various philosophies, were united mainly in their opposition to the Concerned Citizens.

One such parent at a public forum stood up and in an emotional appeal to the board of education said:

"It is very important to me that my children learn what I never did. It is real important that parents like me have a choice to send their children to a class like this. I don't want to pass on my ignorance to my children. "

Another parent stood up and in anger said:

"I am distressed and alarmed that the board is considering dropping a class because an extremist group brought pressure. Teens are sexually active and think they are invulnerable. This is 1992 and I can't believe we will not have a course because 300 people could come to a board meeting and sway them to believe that this course is not necessary. Before we ever vote again, we will have to dig deep to find out about you. We found out two weeks ago."

Although not every parent reacted quite as emotionally, there was a definite feeling that they had not been represented well in a decision that potentially would remove a course they felt necessary and valuable for their children.

One parent, for instance, at a public forum, commented:

"The purpose of the school is to educate, not to censor and withhold information. I will never tell my children that you don't have a right to know factual information. I don't want religion in school. I want openness."

A third group of parents were the majority from whom little or nothing was heard and from whom there is little data except to note that they were largely unrepresented in their opinions about what was happening in the district. One parent who was a member of the local chapter of the National Organization of Women shared her view from a feminist perspective with the curriculum director but her advocacy did not go

beyond that conversation. Her view along with that of other parents who held some strong opinions regarding sexuality education did not go beyond those private conversations.

Students were represented in virtually every aspect of the community discussion. The student body of the senior high school through the student council chose three students to serve on the review committee for the Current Health Issues course. As a part of board policy, a student was elected each year to serve as a board representative and sat at the board table and contributed in the discussions. Two students were also appointed to serve on the curriculum advisory council. During the open forum of the board meeting when the discussion regarding the Current Health Issues class was most heated, the student body sent a representative to express the views of the majority of the students, a viewpoint that was very supportive of the class and teacher. Students who felt there was a need to change some parts of the class spoke up as well.

Often, when the committee reviewing the course content became enmeshed in philosophical discussions, the students on the committee were able to offer

current examples of what students thought and felt. When the committee was in the midst of a heated discussion about instruction on condoms, a student recalled:

> "The only thing I remember is condoms don't always work. Obviously something is right if that's what I remember, as a student I paid attention in class. And I do remember the activity we did with the airplane and how beat up they got and how many diseases I had after we were done, and I think we're taking the statistics and making them so big; I can't even remember the statistics. The only thing I remember is that they're not 100% and that's all that really matters."

The teacher of the course being reviewed shared with the curriculum director on several occasions that she felt under unbelievable scrutiny with requests from parents to visit her class and phone calls at home for information about the class. At one point the principal and curriculum director found it necessary to officially inform her in writing that she had the support of the administration of the school and school district. She felt she received a considerable amount of support from parents of students in her class, from the other professional staff, and from the students.

Part of the pressure on her was the very support that she received from her professional peers. She felt that if she caved into the public intrusion on her

course content she would be allowing a dangerous precedent for censorship of other courses in the high school.

The curriculum director used his power on the committee to persuade, to set the agenda, and to address the moral terms under discussion. As facilitator for the review committee, he focused the discussion on local concerns and local issues and steered the discussion away from articles and information from the Concerned Citizens' national and state groups.

The curriculum director reinforced members of the review committee who kept the focus on the community:

"It's an issue far, far bigger than us, far beyond Laketown. I don't think it is going to be particularly helpful for us, for example, to begin inundating this table, our group, with studies and counter studies about what does and what does not work, because we could go about the process from here to kingdom come and never resolve it. The minute I say this, someone else brings in a study that says this, its 180 degrees from that....I think we need to limit the scope of what we're attempting to do here to the specific course we are looking at and say, 'is what is being taught in this course consistent with the outcomes that our community has set forth for sex education?'"

The strategy of refocusing the language of dialogue on the language of the community instead of the language of the state and national groups, resulted in all parties agreeing to the fifteen conclusions. At

the end of three years, no one quit, no one got fired, nobody walked out of the committee meetings, and the 22 hours of committee dialogue produced working guidelnes for the class.

TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

I offer two early conclusions to my case study; one a reflection on dialogue in our democratic society and second, a personal reference to educators as "reflective practitioners."

Dialogue in a Democratic Society

In states which mandate parent involvement, the diversity of values held by parents challenges school leadership to design processes that allows equitable expression of those values. In the conflict surrounding the health education curriculum in the Laketown district it became critically important for school leadership to keep the dialogue open to all parents, students, staff, and community members.

There were many occasions when the dialogue could have been cut off. It could have stopped when the board was put under pressure to drop the Current Health Issues class. It could have stopped when the first year review process of the health curriculum was

finished. It could have stopped when enough parents had amassed to counter the Concerned Citizens group.

Although the process with considerable influence of school leadership allowed people to speak and listen, there still was danger of lp sided representation. There were many parents whose voices were not heard. Whare were they and what did they have to say?

The process of resolving the conflict by keeping the dialogue going is a part of putting the conflict in context. Schools as microcosms of democracy are required to be inclusive of the diversity existing in their communities. Although achieving democratic dialogue around value issues is a struggle, this case study suggests that community diversity over values on sexuality requires schools to to be inclusive of all parents in curriculum planning and evaluation.

Reflective Practitioner

Schon argued quite persuasively that the school practitioner, whether administrator or teacher, ought to be involved professionally on a continuous basis in doing research on what he/she is doing. Doing this case study research has caused me to reflect that this was

more than research; it was an integral part of my practice as an educational leader and practitioner. In closing the gap between research and practice, Schon observes:

> "Research is an activity of practitioners. It is triggered by features of the practice situation, undertaken on the spot, and immediately linked to action." (p. 306)

Similar tales of conflict over sexuality curriculum could be told by many other districts. It is my hope that as a researcher, my insights and analysis might be helpful to other communities and districts that meet like confrontations in their school communities.

Appendix

The review committee presented 15 conclusions to the curriculum advisory council and board of education. The conclusions were accepted and approved by the board of education on May 11,1992. The conclusions are as follows:

1. **Visiting the class.**

Four members of the review committee visited the class with the conclusion that the class "addressed the total health of the students, including mental, physical, and emotional.

2.**Parent Involvement.**

The letter addressed to parents requesting their permission for their son or daughter taking the class was revised to give them more information about the class and requesting their involvement in discussing the issues of the class.

3.**Correct Terminology.**

The ground rules of the class specify the use of appropriate terminology in all classroom discussion. Questions about the meaning of inappropriate "street language' will be answered but the use of such language

as a substitute for appropriate terminology will not be tolerated.

4. **Safe Sex.**

Because the terminology "safe sex" might provide students a false sense of security regarding any prevention method other than abstinence, the terminology used in regard to sexual behavior and prevention will be "dangerous" and "less dangerous."

5 . **Parents visiting class.**

Parents who have children in the class will be extended an invitation to visit the class.

6. **Curriculum Advisory Council.**

In the future, the advisory council will review all district programs, including electives.

7. **Parent Classes.**

The community education department is encouraged to offer classes for parents on how to talk to their children about sexuality.

8. **Positive Role Models.**

Additional role models of married couples will be investigated to augment the present curriculum.

9. **Videos used in class.**

The instructor of the course will continue to offer updated visual information and will check for

video's consistency with district adopted learner outcomes.

10. **Title of course.**

The title of the course is changed from "Current Health Issues." to "Relationships and Sexual Health Issues."

11. **"Sexual Behaviors."**

The outcomes for the unit were reinforced; namely, that a) students will examine accurate information about sexuality to alleviate myths and misinformation and b) students will increase their awareness and understanding of different value systems and the different sexual lifestyles that individual may choose. The time spent on these outcomes is not excessive (1.5 days) and the course does respect the person without endorsing any behavior.

12.**Community Values.**

The course reinforces the values of the community in regard to health and the law. The course does not try to present one opinion over another in controversial issues. In forming values in these areas, students are directed to search their own values, their parents' values, and the values of the

community. Students are informed regarding the most healthful and less dangerous choices.

13.**Teaching Contraception.**

In teaching the various contraceptive techniques, the course content includes:

a) description of techniques and failure rates

b) display of various devices

c) demonstration of proper usage

d) students examining devices

The criteria used for what is included is whether the information will reduce risk for students. Proper usage does reduce risk.

Students uncomfortable with any part of this instruction will be given option to not attend.

14.**Community Committee**

A community committee of parents will be established to provide a community voice and a community ear to deal with issues of concern in this area.

15. **Value of the Course.**

The quality of the course and the instructor is affirmed and the course should continue. The course substantially, adequately, and appropriately meets the outcomes adopted by the school district.

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